

Eco-friendly green dentistry: The future of dentistry?

Holistic dentistry also called the natural dentistry, unconventional dentistry, progressive dentistry, or biocompatible dentistry is the same discipline of harmonizing and is a progressive branch of medicine and dentistry. Holistic dentistry emphasized insolenes to dental care and said to consider the importance of oral and dental health in the milieu of the patient's perfect somatic as well as demonstrative or transcendent health. Although the holistic dental fraternity is diverse in its practices and approaches, the common threads include strong opposition to the use of traditional materials such as amalgam in dental fillings, nonsurgical approaches to gum disease, and the belief that the root canals may endanger systemic health of the patient through the spread of entombed microorganisms into the body. Numerous dental professionals who use these terms also regard the fluoride use in prevention unfavorably.

Holistic is a form of soothing that considers the unexpurgated person – form, mind, spirit, and emotions in the mission for optimal health and wellness. According to the holistic medicine assertiveness, one can achieve finest health. The primary goal of holistic linctus practice is to gain suitable balance in life. A holistic consultant may use all forms of health care, from conventional medication to various therapies, to treat a patient. For example, when a person suffering from migraine headaches pays a visit to a holistic doctor, instead of walking out solely with medications, the doctor generally take a look at all the potential factors that may be causing the person's headaches such as other health problems, diet, sleep habits, stress, personal problems, and preferred unequalled practices. The treatment plan may or may not only involve drugs to relieve symptoms but also the introduction to lifestyle modifications to help prevent the problems from wonted.

Many detect and express sentiments specially the unconventional dentists who criticized the technique as not being evidence-based by the mainstream dental community and skeptics of alternative medicine. Generally speaking, the holistic dental complex defines the field as: "An approach



to Dentistry that promotes health and wellness instead of the treatment of disease." This approach to dentistry encompasses both modern science and knowledge drawn from the world's great ethnicities on natural healing. Holistic dentistry acknowledges and deals with the mind, body, and spirit of the patient, not just his or her "teeth" and lays out with the basic principles - proper nourishment for the preclusion and reversal of deteriorating dental disease, avoidance and elimination of toxins from dental materials, prevention and treatment of dental malocclusion, and prevention and treatment of gum disease at its biological basis. Some of these modalities were very new and others were very old, but the thing that they shared in common was the system which offered additional options for treatment. A shift from the early emphasis of the dentist on modalities to the consideration of attitudes and feelings of the patient. Practitioners of holistic or biological dentistry can vary a great transaction in terms of the techniques and services they offer, and there is merit to different approaches to dentistry.

However, controversy and debate has arisen over the years regarding the use of alternative health practices in holistic dentistry, as critics claim that many of these practices involve prevention, diagnosis, and treatment outside the scope of dentists. Dentistry, like medicine, is grounded in thorough scientific research. A significant part of the critique of holistic dentistry is related to the unsubstantiated use of certain services and treatments, many of which have either been investigated and found ineffective or have not

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been researched enough to be declared safe and effective for practice. For example, herbal remedies are often recommended in the form of mouthwash and toothpaste to prevent or treat certain dental conditions. They are supposedly safer products because they are “natural.” However, there is a lack of scientific research which supports such treatments, and in fact, herbal remedies have been found to impact the safety of more invasive or prolonged dental procedures and can lead to additional complications if they interact with a patient’s current medications.

Another epitome of introduction in dentistry is a much talked about “Green Dentistry.” It is a known phenomenon that the color green has healing power and is understood to be the most restful and relaxing color. Green can help to enhance vision, stability, and endurance. Renewal, growth, and hope are related to this color, and it indicates safety in the advertising of drugs and medical products. Green dentistry is an approach to dentistry that combines dental practices and environmental conservation. Eco-friendly dentistry is a newly evolving practice of dentistry, which encompasses a simultaneous devotion to sustainability, prevention, precaution, and a minimally invasive patient-centric as well as global-centric treatment philosophy.

Similar reasons lay behind criticisms of the use of craniofacial analysis, homeopathic remedies, and acupuncture in dentistry. These treatments are promoted for dealing with various conditions, ranging from toothaches and bad breath to infections and pain relief. While, for instance, craniofacial therapy has far less scientific support overall than acupuncture, none of these techniques have sufficient well-designed studies which demonstrate their effectiveness.

Misanthropists of alternative dentistry also note that the fees charged by such practitioners are generally several times higher. It is claimed that alternative dentistry is merely the exploitation of niche health beliefs and gimmicks to rationalize higher fees. A potential example of this is the DIAGNodent, a nonvalidated device purported to be able to detect alleged lesions described “cavitation’s” or the nonevidence-based utilization of apparatus by certain “biologic dentists” during removal of amalgam fillings, intended to reduce mercury toxicity by eliminating inhaled airborne material.

Mercury is being used in the form of dental amalgam restorative material for more than 150 years. In recent years, the impact of heavy metal contamination of water systems by dentists, through the production of dental amalgam waste is much of a concern. Dental amalgam contains mercury with silver, tin, and lead and other minerals that can contaminate the environment. However, once mercury enters water or soil, bacteria convert it into methylmercury, a potent neurotoxin that can cause brain, kidney, and lung damage in humans. As severe as the consequences of mercury poisoning are, it is amazingly easy for people to reach high levels of exposure.

All the conventional dental offices used traditional film X-rays. This technology has two significant environmental hazards: Silver and lead. The source of pollution for silver is unused fixer and unused films, and for lead, it is lead foil in film packet and lead apron/shield. Different kinds of disposables used in dentistry are latex gloves, disposable patient bibs, head rest covers, syringes, plastic pouches, and plastic suction tips. These disposable items should be discarded to prevent pollution. Saliva ejector systems, also known as dental vacuum systems, are a critical piece of machinery for any dental office. Unfortunately, these dental vacuum systems utilize tremendous amount of water.

Green dentistry is a whole-Earth approach to tooth care that reduces the environmental impact of dentistry and creates a caring environment for patients. It is based on the model of four R, i.e., rethink, reduce, reuse, and recycle. By adaptation of high technology and the use of good common sense, we can be a part of dentistry’s clean, green, and highly profitable future. Green dentistry reduces supply costs by integrating dental innovations and increases productivity by efficient time use, reducing wastage, and preventing pollution. Ultimately, patients get benefitted by quality treatment with a reduction in treatment costs. The key concepts of a green dental practice include conservation of water and energy, use of nontoxic products, reduction of waste, and elimination of hazardous toxins that negatively affect patients and the environment and promote “Green” products.

Dentistry is most outstandingly and foremost a healing vocation. In today’s world, it is very indispensable to comprehend the significance of being eco-friendly in every aspect of our lives, including dental practice which has a huge bearing on the atmosphere due to the large amount of metallic unwanted waste generated by various dental procedures along with the excessive use of water and electricity, which specifically emphasis the thrust to move toward “Green dentistry.” Green dentistry is an innovative way of dental practice which is environment-friendly and at the same time conserves money and time by reducing waste, conserving energy, and decreasing pollution with the use of latest techniques and procedures. Green or holistic dentistry, therefore, protects the environment and humanity from the hazards of rapid urbanization, especially in developing countries like India. To conclude, we quote Ray Kroc “As long you are green, you are growing. As soon you are ripe, you start to rot.” So let us go green today and save Mother Earth from biohazards for a better tomorrow.



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